

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 FREETO 01309 01 OF 02 221711Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 /087 W  
-----221725Z 073526 /43

P R 221626Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5226  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 FREETOWN 1309

LONDON FOR SIETZ

EO 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS, PINT, SL  
SUBJ: SIERRA LEONE: ELECTION ROUND-UP IV, APRIL 19-22  
  
REF: FREETOWN 1276

1. GEGIN SUMMARY: APC MAY HAVE ALREADY GAINED A MAJORITY IN  
PARLIAMENT WITHOUT THE FORMALITY OF AN ELECTION FOLLOWING THE  
WITHDRAWAL OF THE LAST TWO INDEPENDENT PARAMOUNT CHIEF CANDIDATES  
AND THE RUMORED WITHDRAWAL OF SEVERAL INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES.  
SLPP HAS FILED A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF CHALLENGES BEFORE THE  
ELECTORAL COMMISSION AND MIGHT BE SUCCESSFUL IN A FEW INSTANCES.  
MINISTER OF MINES, KAWUSU-KONTEH HAS BEEN DUMPED BY THE APC  
FOR HIS ROLE IN A "MASSACRE" IN KOINADUGU DISTRICT. SURFACE  
CALM PREVAILS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, BUT GRUMBLING AND ANGER  
ARE WIDESPREAD. STORIES OF A MOUNTING DEATH TOLL OVER NOMINATION  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 FREETO 01309 01 OF 02 221711Z

DAY AND THE APPEARANCE OF ILLEGAL ROAD BLOCKS BY APC TOUGHS  
STRONGLY SUGGESTS THAT THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DISTURBANCES  
BETWEEN NOW AND ELECTION DAY, MAY 6. ESPECIALLY IN THE EASTERN  
AND SOUTHERN PROVINCES AND IN KOINADUGU DISTRICT, REMAINS HIGH.  
LABOR HAS DEMANDED AN IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONDUCT  
OF NOMINATIONS AND WARNS IT CANNOT PERMIT POLITICAL CHAOS  
TO REIGN SUPREME. EMBASSY PRIVATELY HAS WARNED ALL US CITIZENS

IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN PROVINCES AND KOINADUGU DISTRICT TO STOCKPILE FOOD AND WATER AND BE PREPARED TO REMAIN AT HOME AT LEAST FROM MAY 4 TO MAY 8. END SUMMARY.

2. APC HAS MANAGED TO ENGINEER A CLEAN SWEEP OF ALL TWELVE PARAMOUNT CHIEF SEATS IN PARLIAMENT. THE ELECTION OF PARAMOUNT CHIEFS SCHEDULED FOR MAY 4, THUS HAS BEEN CANCELLED. THE NUMBER OF APC PARLIAMENTARIANS ELECTED "UNOPPOSED" NOW TOTALS 46. THESE, PLUS THE THREE PARLIAMENTARIANS THE PRESIDENT CAN APPOINT WITHOUT ELECTIONS, RAISES ASSURED APC SEATS TO 49, ONLY TWO SHY OF A MAJORITY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT A NUMBER OF INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES IN KOINADUGU DISTRICT HAVE WITHDRAWN, LEAVING THEIR APC OPPONENTS UNCONTESTED. IF THIS IS TRUE, APC MAY ALREADY HAVE WON A MAJORITY IN PARLIAMENT.

3. SLPP HAS FILED A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF CHALLENGES BEFORE THE ELECTORAL COMMISSION ALLEGING THAT SLPP CANDIDATES IN NORTHERN PROVINCE AND WESTERN REGION (FREETOWN AND ENVIRONS) WERE ILLEGALLY DISQUALIFIED FOR SUCH TRIVIAL REASONS AS THE MISPELLING OF STREET NAMES ON THEIR PETITIONS. SENIOR CIVIL SERVANT ON ELECTION COMMISSION STATES THAT A TOTAL OF 17 CHALLENGES HAVE BEEN FILED WITH COMMISSION BY BOTH SLPP AND APC, WITH MOST COMING FROM SLPP. HE BELIEVES SLPP HAS CHANCE OF HAVING SOME DISQUALIFICATIONS OVERTURNED BY COMMISSION, WHICH IS MEETING APRIL 22 TO CONSIDER COMPLAINTS.

4. PROMINENT FREETOWN LAWYER WHO PLANS REPRESENT SLPP TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT SLPP PLANS TO FILE NUMEROUS PETITIONS BEFORE HIGH COURT ALLEGING IMPROPER CONDUCT OF ELECTIONS AND FAILURE  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03      FREETO 01309 01 OF 02 221711Z

OF GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT FREE AND FAIR NOMINATIONS. SLPP IS ENRAGED THAT ONLY TWO SLPP CANDIDATES WERE ABLE TO PRESENT NOMINATION PAPERS IN NORTHERN PROVINCE. CHIEF TARGETS OF SLPP PETITIONS WILL BE VICE PRESIDENT KOROMA, PRIME MINISTER KAMARA-TAYLOR, AND SEVERAL OTHER CABINET MINISTERS. PETITIONS MAY NOT BE FILED UNTIL AFTER MAY 6, BUT SLPP TACTICS NOT YET DETERMINED.

5. FREETOWN IS BUZZING WITH NEWS THAT CLOSE ASSOCIATE OF STEVENS, MINISTER OF MINES, S.B. KAWUSU KONTEH, HAS HAD APC SYMBOL WITHDRAWN AND GIVEN TO HIS FORMER SLPP OPPONENT BECAUSE OF KAWUSU KONTEH'S ROLE IN A "MASSACRE" THAT TOOK PLACE IN KURUBONLA VILLAGE, KOINADUGU DISTRICT, NORTHERN PROVINCE. FULL DETAILS ARE UNKNOWN BUT APPARENTLY A LARGE GROUP OF KONTEH'S THUGS ATTACKED THE VILLAGE OF SOME 1000 PERSONS, KILLING A LARGE NUMBER, BURNING MANY BODIES, AND ALSO BURNING OVER HALF THE HOUSES. ALTHOUGH THE VILLAGE IS NOT LOCATED IN KAWUSU KONTEH'S CONSTITUENCY, HE APPARENTLY ORDERED THE ATTACK TO SUPPORT ANOTHER APC CANDIDATE. NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT HAS YET BEEN

MADE OF THIS ATROCITY, AND IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER CHARGES WILL  
BE BROUGHT AGAINST KONTEH.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 FREETO 01309 02 OF 02 221722Z  
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02  
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 /087 W  
-----221725Z 074132 /43

P R 221626Z APR 77  
FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5227  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN  
AMEMBASSY ACCRA  
AMEMBASSY CONAKRY  
AMEMBASSY DAKAR  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 FREETOWN 1309

6. FROM ELSEWHERE, ADDITIONAL REPORTS OF DEATHS OCCURRING  
IN INTER-PARTY FIGHTS ON NOMINATION DAY ARE CIRCULATING.  
WE DON'T BELIEVE THE FULL NUMBER WILL EVER BE KNOWN, BUT THE  
TOTAL EASILY COULD EXCEED 100. SEVEN WERE REPORTED KILLED IN  
BO, FIFTEEN IN MAKENI, SEVERAL IN MOYAMBA, AND MORE THAN TWENTY  
IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE. ALTHOUGH SURFACE CALM NOW PREVAILS  
THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, TRAVELERS ON THE MAIN ROAD UPCOUNTRY  
FROM FREETOWN ARE BEING HARRASSED AT ILLEGAL ROAD BLOCKS SET  
UP BY APC TOUGHS, WHO STOP CARS, CONDUCT SEARCHES, AND DEMAND  
MONEY TO ALLOW PASSAGE. ONE ILLEGAL ROADBLOCK IS WITHIN FIFTY  
FEET OF A POLICE CHECKPOINT AND OPERATES WITHOUT POLICE INTER-  
FERENCE. APPARENTLY, THE PRESIDENT STILL FEARS SLPP SUPPORTERS  
WILL ATTEMPT TO DEMONSTRATE IN FREETOWN.

7. DESPITE THE SURFACE CALM, THE POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER DIS-  
ORDERS BETWEEN NOW AND ELECTION DAY, MAY 6, REMAINS HIGH ESPECIALLY  
IN THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN PROVINCES AND IN KOINADUGU DISTRICT,  
WHERE CONTESTED ELECTIONS WILL TAKE PLACE. A PILOT FOR SIERRA  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 FREETO 01309 02 OF 02 221722Z

LEONE AIRWAYS REPORTED THAT LEBANESE FROM THESE AREAS ARE FLYING TO FREETOWN TO BUY FOOD IN ANTICIPATION THAT STORES WILL BE CLOSED. FEAR IS BEING EXPRESSED THAT THE ABSENCE OF ELECTIONS IN MOST OF THE NORTHERN PROVINCE WILL ALLOW THE APC TO TRANSPORT ITS BULLY BOYS TO THE SOUTHERN AND EASTERN PROVINCES TO INTIMIDATE ELECTORS. TRAVELERS FROM THESE REGIONS REPORT THAT IN CONTRAST TO THEIR BEHAVIOR IN THE 1973 ELECTIONS WHEN THEY WITHDREW RATHER THAN FACE VIOLENCE, THE MENDE SEEM DETERMINED TO RESIST FORCE WITH FORCE AND, IN SOME CASES, MAY TAKE OUT THEIR FRUSTRATIONS ON KNOWN APC SUPPORTERS EVEN BEFORE BEING PROVOKED. BOTH PROVINCES HAVE BEEN HEAVILY REINFORCED WITH POLICE AND ISU RESERVES - THE LATTER FREQUENTLY ACCOMPANY APC CANDIDATES IN DISREGARD TO IMPARTIALITY.

8. SIERRA LEONE LABOR CONGRESS (SLLC) PUBLISHED A STATEMENT ON APRIL 21, SIGNED BY 30 OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE MEMBERS CONCERNING THE POLITICAL SITUATION. SLLC CATEGORICALLY STATED THAT THE NOMINATIONS WERE NOT CONDUCTED FREELY AND FAIRLY, REPORTED THAT A NUMBER OF ARRESTS AND DETENTIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE NOMINATIONS, INCLUDING SEVERAL PROMINENT LABOR MEMBERS, AND WARNED THAT SLLC WILL NOT SIT BY IDLY WHILE THE COUNTRY FALLS INTO POLITICAL CHAOS. THE SLLC CALLED ON THE PRESIDENT TO CONDUCT AN IMMEDIATE AND IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE CONDUCT OF NOMINATIONS, TO CONVENE A MEETING OF LEADERS OF ALL PARTIES, TO SEEK A POLITICAL TRUCE BEFORE ELECTION DAY, AND WARNED THAT IT IS PREPARED TO TAKE "APPROPRIATE ACTION" IF THE SITUATION CONTINUES TO DEGENERATE.

9. EMBASSY HAS INSTRUCTED WARDENS THROUGHOUT EASTERN AND SOUTHERN PROVINCES AND IN KOINADUGU DISTRICT PRIVATELY TO WARN AMERICAN CITIZENS IN THESE AREAS TO STOCKPILE FOOD AND WATER IN ANTICIPATION THAT STORES WILL BE CLOSED AND TO BE PREPARED TO REMAIN AT HOME AT LEAST FROM MAY 4 TO MAY 8. EMBASSY IS CONTINUING TO EVALUATE THE SITUATION CLOSELY AND, IF INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE DISTURBANCES CONTINUE TO MOUNT, AN ORDER TO STAND-FAST MAY BE ISSUED.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 FREETO 01309 02 OF 02 221722Z

SAMUELS

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN



## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ELECTIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 22-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977FREETO01309  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770140-0756  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** FREETOWN  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770430/aaaaazmk.tel  
**Line Count:** 216  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 027f1fa1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 77 FREETOWN 1276  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 02-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 2728382  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SIERRA LEONE: ELECTION ROUND-UP IV, APRIL 19-22  
**TAGS:** PINS, PINT, SL  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/027f1fa1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009